**History of gardening in Britain and Russia**

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**Malyutina Oksana**

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**Introduction**

The **history of ornamental gardening** may be considered aesthetic expressions of beauty through art and nature, a display of taste or style in civilized life, an expression of an individual's or culture's philosophy, and sometimes as a display of private status or national pride—in private and public landscapes.



Garden-making and design was a key precursor to landscape architecture, and it began in West Asia, eventually spreading westward into Greece, Spain, Germany, France, Britain, etc. Modern words of “garden” and “yard” are descendants of the Old English term “geard,” which means fence or enclosure.

**English garden: inspiration and influence**

The **English landscape garden**, also called **English landscape park** or simply the **English garden** is a style of “landscape” garden which emerged in England in the early 18th century, and spread across Europe, replacing the more formal, symmetrical [*jardin à la française*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jardin_%C3%A0_la_fran%C3%A7aise) of the 17th century as the principal gardening style of Europe. The English garden presented an idealized view of nature. It drew inspiration from paintings of landscapes by [Claude Lorraine](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Lorraine) and [Nicolas Poussin](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicolas_Poussin),



and, in the Anglo-Chinese garden, from the classic [Chinese gardens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_gardens) of the East, which had recently been described by European travellers. The English garden usually included a lake, sweeps of gently rolling lawns set against groves of trees, and recreations of classical temples, Gothic ruins, bridges, and other picturesque architecture, designed to recreate an idyllic pastoral landscape. The work of [Lancelot "Capability" Brown](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capability_Brown) was particularly influential. By the end of the 18th century, the English garden was being imitated by the [French landscape garden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_landscape_garden), and as far away as St. Petersburg, Russia, in [Pavlovsk](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pavlovsk,_Saint_Petersburg), the gardens of the future [Emperor Paul](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emperor_Paul). It also had a major influence on the form of the [public parks](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Public_parks) and gardens, which appeared around the world in the 19th century.

The predecessors of the landscape garden in England were the great parks created by Sir [John Vanbrugh](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Vanbrugh) (1664–1726) and [Nicholas Hawksmoor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nicholas_Hawksmoor) at [Castle Howard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Castle_Howard) (1699–1712),



[Blenheim Palace](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blenheim_Palace) (1705–1722), and the [Claremont Landscape Garden](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claremont_Landscape_Garden) at [Claremont House](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claremont_House) (1715–1727). These parks featured vast lawns, woods, and pieces of architecture, such as the classical mausoleum designed by Hawksmoor at Castle Howard. At the center of the composition was the house, behind which were formal and symmetrical gardens in the style of the garden [*à la française*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_formal_garden), with ornate carpets of floral designs and walls of hedges, decorated with statues and fountains. These gardens, modelled after the [gardens of Versailles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gardens_of_Versailles), were designed to impress visitors with their size and grandeur.

**Roman Gardens**

The earliest English gardens that we know of were planted by the Roman conquerors of Britain in the 1st century AD. The Roman gardens that we know the most about are those of the large villas and palaces. The best example of the latter is probably [Fishbourne Roman Palace](http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=52) in Sussex, where an early garden has been partly reconstructed.

   
  
Fishbourne shows a carefully symmetrical formal planting of low box hedges split by graveled walks. The hedges are punctuated by small niches which probably held ornaments like statues, urns, or garden seats. The formal garden near the house gave way to a landscaped green space leading down to the waterside below. There is also a small kitchen garden, which is planted with fruits and vegetables common in Roman Britain.   
  
We know very little about the gardens of Anglo-Saxon England, which is another way of saying that the warlike Anglo-Saxons probably did not hold gardening to be important.

**Monastic Gardens**

It was not until the Middle Ages that gardens once more became important in British life. Monasteries had both kitchen gardens and herb gardens to provide the practicalities of food and medicine. The monastery cloister provided an open green space surrounded by covered walks, generally with a well, or fountain at the centre.   
Castles sometimes made room for small courtyard gardens, with paths through raised flower beds. Other common features of medieval castle gardens include turf seats and high mounds, or mounts, which provided a view over the castle walls.





**Garden styles at a glance**

* **Roman Britain**: formal, low hedges
* **Medieval**: small enclosed, with turf seats and mounds
* **Tudor**: knot gardens, enclosed in hedges or walls
* **Stuart**: formal Italianate and French styles
* **Georgian**: informal, landscaped, open parkland
* **Victorian**: bedding plants, colourful, public gardens
* **20th Century+**: mixed styles, herbaceous borders

As castles gave way to fortified manor houses in the later medieval period, the garden became a simple green space surrounded by hedges or fences. Games such as bowls or tennis took place on the lawn.   
  
The next stage of the English garden came after the Reformation. Many landowners enclosed common land to create parks for keeping deer or cattle. This 'natural' landscape gave way to formal gardens near the house, still sheltered from the outside world by hedges or walls.

**Tudor Gardens**

The Tudors followed Italian influence in creating gardens which mirrored the alignment of the house, creating a harmony of line and proportion that had been missing in the Medieval period. For the first time since the Romans left, sundials and statues were once more popular garden ornaments.

But the most prominent contribution of the Tudors to gardening was the knot garden. Knots were intricate patterns of lawn hedges, usually of box, intended to be viewed from the mount, or raised walks. The spaces between the hedges were often filled with flowers, shrubs, or herbs.



Hampton Court Palace

No Tudor gardens have survived intact, but some of the best examples still remaining can be glimpsed at [Haddon Hall](http://www.britainexpress.com/counties/derbyshire/houses/haddon.htm) (Derbyshire), [Montacute House](http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=296) (Somerset), and [Hampton Court Palace](http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=169) (near London).   
The latter has reconstructions of Tudor knot gardens, but these were planted in the early 20th century.   
If the Tudors were heavily influenced by Italian ideas the Stuarts were slaves to the French fashion for formal gardens. The chief feature of this French style are a broad avenue sweeping away from the house, flanked by rectangular parterres made of rigidly formal low hedges. The prime survivors of this style can be seen at [Blickling Hall](http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=146) (Norfolk), [Melbourne Hall](http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=3743) (Derbyshire), and [Chatsworth House](http://www.britainexpress.com/counties/derbyshire/houses/Chatsworth.htm) (also Derbyshire).   
An offshoot of the French style was provided by the Dutch, who advocated more water, flower bulbs, trees planted in tubs, and topiary. [Westbury Court](http://www.britainexpress.com/counties/glouces/gardens/Westbury-Court.htm) (Gloucestershire) shows this Dutch style.



Westbury Court,

Gloucestershire

The 18th century saw a swing from Renaissance formality to a more "natural" look. One of the prime movers of this style was the art patron, Lord Burlington. [William Kent](http://www.britainexpress.com/History/bio/kent.htm) designed an influential garden for Lord Burlington at [Chiswick House](http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=156) based on carefully calculated vistas with temples, statues, and classical ornaments punctuating openings in treed parkland.

  
  
 **English Landscape Gardens**

Lines were no longer straight, paths curve and wander, and parterres are replaced by grass. Trees were planted in clusters rather than in straight lines, and rounded lakes replaced the rectangular ponds of the earlier style. The garden became open, a park joining the house to the outside world rather than a carefully nurtured refuge from it. This natural style begun by Kent evolved into the "landscape garden" under Kent's pupil and son-in-law, [Lancelot "Capability" Brown](http://www.britainexpress.com/History/bio/brown.htm). Brown, whose curious nickname came from his habit of telling prospective clients that their gardens showed "great capabilities", had an enormous effect upon the course of English gardening and architectural style.

The landscape garden made the English country house a part of the fields and farmlands surrounding it. Gone were hedgerows and fences. Gone, too, were formal beds and walks. Grass parkland was brought right up to the doors of the house. The greatest surviving landscape gardens by Capability Brown are at [Longleat](http://www.britainexpress.com/counties/wiltshire/houses/longleat.htm) (Wiltshire) and [Blenheim Palace](http://www.britainexpress.com/counties/oxfordshire/houses/Blenheim.htm) (Oxon).

  
  
  
**Victorian Gardens**

In the Victorian era the pendulum swung again, to massed beds of flowers (bedding out plants raised in greenhouses), exotic colours, and intricate designs. The most influential gardeners of this period were J.C. Loudon, and later, Joseph Paxton ([Chatsworth House](http://www.britainexpress.com/counties/derbyshire/houses/Chatsworth.htm) and [Kew](http://www.britainexpress.com/London/kew.htm)).

The Victorian period also saw a profusion of public gardens and green spaces aimed at bringing culture to the masses. Some of the finest Victorian gardens are public parks, like People's Park in Halifax.   
  
Taste in the late Victorian period varied between formal and the "wild" garden advocated by the influential writer William Robinson. Sometimes the formal and informal looks were combined in the same garden, as at [Sissinghurst Castle](http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=202) (Kent)

  
  
**Modern Gardens**

Gertrude Jekyll is arguably the most influential gardener of 20th century England. She popularized the herbaceous border and planning a garden based on colour schemes. This built on the tradition of the "Cottage garden", with its profusion of flowers wherever space permits, and climbers on trellises and walls. Jekyll saw the house and garden as part of an integral whole, rather than the garden as an afterthought to the building. Her work survives at Marsh Court (Hampshire) and [Hestercombe](http://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=2049) (Somerset).

  
  
Gardening has always been a matter of personal taste, and often the outstanding works of previous generations are torn down to make way for the style of the next. For that reason it is hard to find unaltered examples of historical gardens in England.

Yet, throughout Britain there are gardens great and small, formal and informal, private and public, that illustrate the British passion for creating green, growing spaces of their own. All are different, and all, like their owners and creators, have a distinct personality.

### **Russian Garden and Park Design**.

Russia enters into the history of gardening much later and it is impossible to speak of any individual cultivation before the days of Peter the Great, in the first third of the eighteenth century.

Information is very scanty about the summer residences of the emperors at Moscow. Up to the end of the seventeenth century we find nothing but wooden buildings, very subject to danger from fire. They had gardens round them in the reign of Peter the Great. But after Petersburg was founded, there arose not only the palaces of emperor and nobles, but gardens as well.  The Tsar had seen European gardens on his travels in Holland, England, and Germany. He knew far better how to protect the gardens at his own home against his barbarous troops, than how to protect those foreign gardens and homes which he had ravaged on his travels. In 1714, he made a great garden at the summer palace on the so-called Admiralty Island, which was made by the River Neva with her canalized arms, and has now disappeared. Here he and his followers adopted all the ideas that the styles of the time had to give. Parterres with their grand waters, cascades and playing streams, plantations with tall espaliers. All were adorned with works by famous Italian sculptors.

For the grotto which Peter made, as also for the water-works, he engaged the great architect Schlüter of Berlin, who had left his own home, in a state of discontent, to find a new field of activity in the Tsar's service, but the very next year died in Petersburg without having done anything. The French artist Le Blond fared better, for he was at once entrusted by the Tsar with a most important piece of work. Opposite the town, at the south of the gulf, the Tsar had built a little house on the shore, before he was attracted in 1715 by a beautiful spot where he built a pleasure-castle, which he named **[Peterhof](http://www.gardenvisit.com/garden/peterhof-petrodvorets)**, This was on a natural terrace twelve meters in height, where the hilly part of it falls away somewhat towards the land.

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| C:\Users\Андрей\Desktop\проект\загружено (1).jpg  PETERHOF, RUSSIA—THE CASCADE AND UPPER GARDEN |

Of course it was intended to rival the French Residence, and so French artists were called in. The plans came straight from Paris, and there was nothing to hold [Le Blond](http://www.gardenvisit.com/biography/jean-baptiste_alexander_le_blond) back from getting on with the castle and garden.

The great advantage here was that they did not have to concern themselves much with underground operations. But the planting of the vegetation was no trifling matter, and whole shiploads of trees and plants were procured. The interior of Russia supplied elm and maple, and we are told that 40,000 trees were brought. Then came beeches, limes, and fruit-trees from Western Europe. Foreign specimens were brought from the ends of the earth, and in spite of the long winters flourished and still flourish. With these the whole of the lower part, from the sea to the lofty terrace, was planted and laid out as a park, with a great variety of fountains, which marked the crossways of the main avenues.

There is one cross-road which starts from a little house called Monplaisir, built on the strand by Peter in a pretty little garden in the Dutch style. It leads to a second small building, and this is named Many—another reminiscence of France. Behind the Marly pond falls a cascade, glittering on gilded steps. The boskets contain, among many other water-devices, some weeping trees; little did Madame de Montespan know what an effect she would work with that boscage which she designed. But Peter also was very fond of fairy-tales and fantasies; in his little hermitage there was a real “table-be-covered,” which at the sound of a bell rose out of the ground and vanished again. This park was divided in half by a sort of large waterway in the middle axis of the castle



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| PETERHOF, RUSSIA—CASCADE AND CANAL |

 A double cascade falls from a terrace in front of the castle down into a wide basin. There is a grotto beside it, with sets of seven steps in colored marble, and on them a series of gilt statues. In the basin is Samson on a rock, tearing open the lion’s mouth, from which a great column of water goes up. From here a quiet canal flows seaward, and buildings at the harbor help the disembarking and landing from the royal ships. On both sides of the canal there is a walk with fountains which throw silver showers up and down upon the dark tall firs, and various masks spurt their waters into the canal. There is a cheerful open garden beside the cascade, and the terrace steps on either side are decorated with dwarf trees, while on the flat there is always a basin with beds of flowers. Above, in front of the castle, there is an incomparable view, for right over the lower garden and the water's edge, which so soon was covered with fine country houses and gardens following the king’s example, the eye sweeps right over the sea to the town with its golden domes, while far away on the right the Finnish coast appears. Behind the castle lies the upper garden with its fountains and the Neptune in the middle; here all travellers praise the lovely clear waters that the hills of Peterhof pour out in profusion. Hence proceeded wide star-shaped avenues, passing through the park above, and meeting at one point on the hill, whence it is possible to see all the views skillfully and pleasingly combined.

The French artists, using the nature of the ground, cleverly created a wonderful picture. This garden is clearly a symbol of all Petersburg culture, which at that time was the scion of a French stock. For western eyes there was too much gold and glitter and too many coolers used in other castles as well as in this one, in accordance with the Russian taste and feeling. There is a story that the French ambassador, when he first saw **[Tsarskoje-Selo](http://www.gardenvisit.com/garden/tsarskoe_selo-pushkin)**, Queen Catherine’s castle, exclaimed that there was nothing wanting but a case to protect this jewel in bad weather. The short reign of the French garden came to an end with this castle. Catherine was so modern a ruler that she laid out her garden in the new English style.

Throughout her hectic life, Catherine strove for what she called an 'English Simplicity'. The illustration, right, shows her in English dress in one of  her English gardens, looking not unlike a character from a Jane Austen novel. Catherine  became great friends with an English ambassador and dedicated one volume of her memoirs to him. As in other parts of late-Baroque Europe, a landscape garden became, for Catherine, a badge of enlightenment. She made two of them, at [Tsarskoe Seloe](http://www.gardenvisit.com/garden/tsarskoe_selo-pushkin)



 and at [Pavlosk](http://www.gardenvisit.com/garden/pavlovsk).



Her private domains were far more liberal than the vast empire she ruled. Both are near St Petersburg, Russians 'European capital' and a city, which she greatly preferred to Moscow. A later Russian despot, Stalin, hated St Petersburg precisely on account of its European-ness. It remains a great Baroque capital with Catherine's landscape gardens in the suburbs.

**National attitudes towards gardening.**

The most popular hobby of the British is gardening. Most English people love gardens, their own above all, and this is probably one reason why so many people prefer to live in houses rather than flats. In the suburbs, you can see row after row of ordinary small houses. And each house is surrounded by lots of flowers. Many people who have no gardens of their own have patches of land. They spend much leisure time working among their flowers, trees and vegetables. The British take part in numerous flower-shows and vegetable shows with very good prizes. Such shows are very popular in Britain. To many gardeners the process of growing the plants and taking care of them seems more important than the pleasure of looking at the flowers or the prospect of eating vegetables. In many places, a competitive gardener's desire is to grow the biggest cabbages or leeks or carrots.

As well as people in Britain, Russians are fond of nature and gardening. There are a lot people, who choose to live in countryside rather than to stay in towns or huge megacities.

Our national countryside houses are usually called “Dachas”. “Dacha” is a seasonal or year-round second home. They were initially intended only as recreation getaways of city dwellers and for the purpose of growing small gardens for food. Dachas are used today for [fishing](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fishing) and other leisure activities, and growing garden crops remains popular, still seen as an important part of dacha life. Every spring they plant different flowers and decorative trees near their houses. Russian people like to spend their leisure time admiring the beauty of the nature and their gardens.

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